

**NEWS**

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**City of Glendale**

5850 W. Glendale Ave. / Glendale, Arizona 85301

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Date: February 8, 2019

**CONTACT:** Sergeant John Roth 623 930-3076  
Officer Tiffany Smith 623 930-3276**Volatile Glendale Policing Situation Detailed**

**GLENDALE, Ariz.** – On July 26, 2017, Glendale Police Officers were in the area 5900 W. Myrtle Avenue conducting intensive patrol due to increased crime reported in the area. At approximately 7:30 PM, Officers Matt Schneider and Mark Lindsey contacted the occupants of a Ford Taurus after Officer Schneider observed a traffic violation. The contact occurred in a parking lot that was included in a blanket trespass agreement with the City and parking lot owner. The officers both approached the Ford Taurus and found that it was occupied by three adults and two children. Upon contact, officers discovered that the driver did not have a driver's license and began to address an observed seat belt violation. The occupants of the vehicle were identified as Shawn Blackburn (34), the driver of the vehicle; Johnny Wheatcroft (37), the front seat passenger; and Anya Chapman (34), the driver's side rear passenger with two children beside her, ages eleven (11) and six (6).

During the officers' contact at the vehicle, they each noted Johnny Wheatcroft reaching down below the seat into a backpack. Mr. Wheatcroft also immediately upon contact exhibited verbal non-compliance by refusing to identify himself and failed to obey the officer's instructions to stop reaching his hands beneath the seat into the backpack and about the vehicle in the area between the seat and console. For the safety of themselves and those around them, including the minor children, the officers attempted

to remove Mr. Wheatcroft from the vehicle so they could maintain a safe eye on him for the duration of the traffic stop as well as conduct a pat down for weapons. Mr. Wheatcroft immediately began to physically resist the officers' attempts to escort him from the vehicle while continuing to place his hands where officers could not see them. Officers displayed their Tasers and warned him of potential Taser use to gain his compliance; however, Mr. Wheatcroft continued to argue, yell and physically resist the officers' control holds. Due to the physical resistance from Mr. Wheatcroft, the Taser was used in a drive stun capacity in order to gain control and avoid physical injury.

While officers attempted to detain Mr. Wheatcroft, Anya Chapman swung a bag filled with bottled drinks, striking Officer Lindsey in the head, rendering him unconscious. Seeing his partner unconscious, coupled with Mr. Wheatcroft's continued resistance and the unknown threat from within the vehicle, Officer Schneider deployed his Taser, striking Mr. Wheatcroft. Dealing with two adults that were being physically aggressive and had already assaulted one officer, Officer Schneider asked for additional officers to respond. As multiple officers arrived on scene, they tended to the injured officer and helped detain Mr. Wheatcroft as he was continuing to resist officers by kicking and screaming. Mr. Wheatcroft was eventually able to be calmed down, and he and Anya Chapman were taken into custody without further incident. As officers continued their investigation, a usable quantity of methamphetamine was found within the vehicle. Mr. Wheatcroft and Ms. Chapman were charged with Aggravated Assault due to their actions, in which Ms. Chapman subsequently plead guilty. Fire personnel responded to the scene to evaluate Mr. Wheatcroft and the injured officer. Mr. Wheatcroft refused medical attention. The officer that was struck was transported to a local valley hospital for medical treatment and returned to full duty several days later.

The Glendale Police Department is dedicated to remaining transparent with the community that we serve, and public safety is the top priority. The Department

recognizes that society expects accountability and we hold ourselves to the highest standards set by Arizona Police Officer Standards and Training as well as state law. Per Department protocol regarding any response to resistance, a review of the officers' actions has been performed and discipline implemented regarding certain tactics used by one officer.

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*\*Spanish translation available*

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is to protect the lives and property of the people we serve."*

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*Integrity / Courage / Excellence / Respect / Dedication / Compassion*